



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231
www.uspto.gov

T.D - 6

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/761,465	01/16/2001	Robert J. Koffron	KOFF 0124 PUS	5262

7590 05/17/2002

Matthew M. Jakubowski
Brooks & Kushman P.C.
Twenty-Second Floor
1000 Town Center
Southfield, MI 48075

EXAMINER

KASTLER, SCOTT R

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1742

DATE MAILED: 05/17/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/761,465	KOFFRON ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Scott Kastler	1742

— The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 April 2002.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-25 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-25 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) Other: _____

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 4, 9, 13, 14 and 23-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Eastwood. Eastwood teaches a vortex inhibitor comprising a uniform refractory body (2) having a generally tapering shape along a longitudinal axis from a base to a narrow end, and including a hollow chamber (3) which may include a shaft (15) and a sacrificial member (12) connected to the uniform refractory body, thereby showing all aspects of the above claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eastwood.

As applied to claim 1 above, Eastwood teaches a vortex inhibitor showing all aspects of the above claims except the specifically recited connection means for connecting the sacrificial member (12) and the uniform refractory body (2), or the use of a sacrificial member which is either solid or refractory coated. However, Eastwood allows for the use of any desired connection means for connecting parts (2) and (12) (see col. 2 lines 28-31 for example).

Art Unit: 1742

Eastwood also allows for the tail (12) to include a refractory surface (see col. 3, lines 50-54 for example). The subject matter as a whole would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made because with respect to the particularly claimed connection means, as stated above, Eastwood allows for the use of any desired connection means, and it is Officially noted that screw threads, crimps and protrusions are old and well known connection mechanisms in the refractory connection art. It would have been a modification obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to substitute the connection means disclosed by Eastwood and employ any other art recognized equivalent connection means, since Eastwood specifically allows for such a substitution. With respect to the use of a refractory coating or a solid sacrificial member, again as stated above, Eastwood allows for the use of a sacrificial member with an exposed refractory surface, and it has been well settled that where a component (the sacrificial member) is shown by the prior art, motivation to alter the shape or configuration of the component (solid or hollow) without materially altering the function of the component would have been a modification obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made. See *In re Dailey*, 149 USPQ 47. Therefore, it would have also been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to employ a sacrificial member in Eastwood where the member is solid with a refractory outer surface, since Eastwood allows for an exterior refractory surface on a part of the sacrificial member and the configuration of the sacrificial member as either a solid or hollow bar would not materially alter the operation of the member or the apparatus as a whole.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed on 4-5-2002 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant's arguments that the rod (12) of Eastwood is not a "sacrificial member" since it is not conditioned to deteriorate is not persuasive because the member of the instant claims is not required to be conditioned to deteriorate. Further all rods when exposed to a molten metal environment would deteriorate to some extent. Finally, the rod of the instant claims is also coated with deterioration resistant materials, such as refractory coatings.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Scott Kastler whose telephone number is (703) 308-2506. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday.

The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9310 for regular communications and (703) 872-9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0651.



Scott Kastler
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1742

sk
May 16, 2002